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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/711,859	11/12/2000	Mika Henrik Tuomi	BBOY-25.415	8594
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HOWISON & ARNOTT, L.L.P. P.O. BOX 741715 DALLAS, TX 75374-1715				
			EXAMINER AMINI, JAVID A	
			ART UNIT 2672	PAPER NUMBER 15

DATE MAILED: 07/02/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/711,859

Applicant(s)

TUOMI ET AL.

Examiner

Javid A Amini

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 08 March 2004.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 3-20 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☒ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on March 08, 2004 has been entered.

Drawings

The drawings are objected to because they are informal drawing, require proper labeling, and paper. A proposed drawing correction or corrected drawings are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed March 08, 2004 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

Response to remarks on page 8, lines 7-8: Applicant argues that there is no Z-ordering, This feature clearly is not disclosed or suggested in the Stroyan reference. Examiner's reply: The term "Z-ordering" is not defined in the specification, but examiner assumes that the term "Z-ordering" has similar meaning as the term "Z-value" on page 22 lines 116-27 in the specification, the depth of the pixel is stored in a Z-buffer. Applicant amended independent claims 3 and 12 based on Z-ordering (Z-value), as following statement: which antialiasing value is retained as a function of the polygon being in the foreground during the rendering operation.

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Applicant uses the language of “during the rendering the antialiasing value is retained”. Stroyan in col. 3, lines 45-46 discloses that a fourth memory segment for retaining anti-alias blending information associated with the pixels. Stroyan in fig. 1C illustrates the area of polygon occupying a pixel is calculated and in fig. 1D illustrates the result of fig. 1C that represents the function of the polygon being in the foreground is inherent. Stroyan in col. 6, lines 5-52 discloses complete information about the Z-buffer and the data is written in the frame buffer. Stroyan in fig. 4 illustrates frame buffer back and front with z-buffer (step 154). The z-buffer in the frame buffer back can be called a space for secondary z-value. Stroyan in col. 3, lines 37-46 discloses that a system is provided having frame buffer circuitry uniquely configured for rendering an anti-aliased graphics scene. In accordance with one embodiment, the frame buffer circuitry includes a first memory segment for storing color values associated with pixels, a second memory segment for storing alpha values associated with the pixels, a third memory segment for storing depth values associated with the pixels, and a fourth memory segment for storing anti-alias blending information associated with the pixels.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

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1. Claim 3-20 rejected under 35 U.S.C 102(e) as being anticipated by Stroyan US patent 6,429,877 B1, filled date of July 30, 1999.

2. Claim 3.

As for claim 3, "determining coverage parameters associated with an edge pixel on an edge of a polygon being rendered that is stored in a first buffer; creating an antialiasing value representing the relationship of the edge pixel to its surrounding neighbors as to the amount of color that is to be blended into the edge pixel of a color corresponding to that of its surrounding neighbors", Stroyan discloses and illustrates in (col. 8, lines 50-67) and Fig. 6, that is illustrating the top-level functional operation of a method for preserving color blending information, in accordance with one aspect of the present invention. In accordance with this method, a first step (step 202) may be to determine whether a given pixel is an edge pixel (i.e., a pixel that borders a primitive edge). If not, then the pixel color may be directly written into the appropriate memory segment of the frame buffer (step 204). Thereafter, a coverage value of one (binary value "11111") may be written to the extra byte 162 of memory segment 160, corresponding to the current pixel (step 206). Thereafter, the method may proceed to the next pixel (step 208), and the foregoing steps may be repeated for each pixel of a rasterization. If a given pixel is determined to be an edge pixel, then the method may determine the coverage area for the current pixel (step 210). In this regard, the coverage area is the percentage of the pixel (containing the center point) that lies within the edge of the primitive.

"storing the antialiasing value in a second buffer in association with the edge pixel in the first buffer", Stroyan discloses in abstract that a system is provided having frame buffer circuitry uniquely configured for rendering an antialiased graphics scene. In accordance with one

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embodiment, the frame buffer circuitry includes a first memory segment for storing color values associated with pixels, a second memory segment for storing alpha values associated with the pixels, a third memory segment for storing depth values associated with the pixels, and a fourth memory segment for storing anti-alias blending information associated with the pixels.

“which antialiasing value is retained as a function of the polygon being in the foreground during the rendering operation”, Applicant uses the language of “during the rendering the antialiasing value is retained”. Stroyan in col. 3, lines 45-46 discloses that a fourth memory segment for retaining anti-alias blending information associated with the pixels. The reference Stroyan in col. 6, lines 5-52 discloses complete information about the Z-buffer and the data is written in the frame buffer. Stroyan in fig. 4 illustrates frame buffer back and front with z-buffer (step 154). The z-buffer in the frame buffer back can be called a space for secondary z-value.

Stroyan in col. 3, lines 37-46 discloses that a system is provided having frame buffer circuitry uniquely configured for rendering an anti-aliased graphics scene. In accordance with one embodiment, the frame buffer circuitry includes a first memory segment for storing color values associated with pixels, a second memory segment for storing alpha values associated with the pixels, a third memory segment for storing depth values associated with the pixels, and a fourth memory segment for storing anti-alias blending information associated with the pixels.

3. Claim 4.

As for claim 4, “wherein the created antialiasing value is a single antialiasing value represented as a digital word”, the step is inherent because all created value/s represented by digital word.

4. Claim 5.

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As for claim 5, “wherein the step of creating the antialiasing value comprises the steps of: supersampling the edge pixel during rendering thereof to provide a plurality of subpixels, wherein each of the subpixels contains information as to coverage by the polygon”, Stroyan discloses in (col. 2, lines 52-60) that anti-aliasing methods are generally classified into a super-sampling method and an area sampling method. In the super-sampling method, the color value of a pixel is calculated by obtaining the color values of several sub-pixels within the pixel and averaging (or blending) the obtained color values of the sub-pixels. In area sampling, the area of the polygon occupying a pixel is calculated and then the color value of the area ratio is calculated.

“converting the coverage pattern of the subpixels into a single antialiasing value that represents the positional relationship of the coverage as to neighboring pixels”, Stroyan teaches in (col. 3, lines 50-54)) that the region of interest is effectively extended to pixels that touch the primitive edge in any amount. This allows the invention to represent minority coverage of a pixel by an appropriate blending by a coverage percentage.

5. Claim 6.

As for claim 6, “wherein the single antialiasing value represents both coverage percentage and the coverage pattern”, the step is inherent because both coverage (percentage and pattern) are sharing the same information.

6. Claim 7.

As for claim 7, “wherein the single antialiasing value comprises a map of the subpixels”, Stroyan teaches in (col. 2, lines 51-60) that anti-aliasing methods are generally classified into a super-sampling method and an area sampling method. In the super-sampling method, the color

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value of a pixel is calculated by obtaining the color values of several sub-pixels within the pixel and averaging (or blending) the obtained color values of the sub-pixels. In area sampling, the area of the polygon occupying a pixel is calculated and then the color value of the area ratio is calculated.

7. Claim 8.

As for claim 8, “wherein the single antialiasing value has a plurality of bit associated therewith in a digital word of a length equal to the number of subpixels, with each bit having a value that represents whether the subpixel is covered”, the step is inherent because all created value/s represented by digital word and the value is representing the subpixel.

8. Claim 9.

As for claim 9, “further comprising the step of filtering the edge pixel prior to a display operation, comprising the steps of: retrieving the edge pixel and the associated antialiasing value; determining the color of at least one adjacent pixel to the edge pixel; blending the color of the at least one adjacent pixel with the edge pixel as a function of the positional relationship of the subpixels in the supersampled edge pixel to provide an antialiased pixel; and storing the antialiased pixel in a frame buffer”, see rejection of claims 3 and 5.

9. Claim 10.

As for claim 10, “wherein the step of determining comprises the step of determining the color of at least two adjacent pixels to the edge pixel, and the step of blending comprises blending the color of the at least two adjacent pixels with the edge pixel as a function of the positional relationship of the subpixels in the supersampled edge pixel to the at least two adjacent pixels to provide the antialiased pixel”, see rejection of claims 5 and 7.

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10. Claim 11.

As for claim 11, “wherein the step of creating the antialiasing value for the edge pixel is operable to further create a depth value in association with the antialiasing value, which depth value comprises the depth value of the subpixel that is covered by the foremost polygon”, Stroyan teaches in (col. 2, lines 51-60) that anti-aliasing methods are generally classified into a super-sampling method and an area sampling method. In the super-sampling method, the color value of a pixel is calculated by obtaining the color values of several sub-pixels within the pixel and averaging (or blending) the obtained color values of the sub-pixels. In area sampling, the area of the polygon occupying a pixel is calculated and then the color value of the area ratio is calculated.

11. Claim 12.

As for claim 12, “A graphics engine for antialiasing edge pixels in a rendering operation, comprising: a rendering engine for determining coverage parameters associated with an edge pixel on an edge of a polygon being rendered that is stored in a first buffer; an antialiasing engine for creating an antialiasing value representing the relationship of the edge pixel to its surrounding neighbors as to the amount of color that is to be blended into the edge pixel of a color corresponding to that of its surrounding neighbors; and a second buffer for storing the antialiasing value in association with the edge pixel in said first buffer”, Stroyan discloses and illustrates in (col. 8, lines 50-67) and Fig. 6, that is illustrating the top-level functional operation of a method for preserving color blending information, in accordance with one aspect of the present invention. In accordance with this method, a first step (step 202) may be to determine whether a given pixel is an edge pixel (i.e., a pixel that borders a primitive edge).

If not, then the pixel color may be directly written into the appropriate memory segment of the frame buffer (step 204). Thereafter, a coverage value of one (binary value "11111") may be written to the extra byte 162 of memory segment 160, corresponding to the current pixel (step 206). Thereafter, the method may proceed to the next pixel (step 208), and the foregoing steps may be repeated for each pixel of a rasterization. If a given pixel is determined to be an edge pixel, then the method may determine the coverage area for the current pixel (step 210). In this regard, the coverage area is the percentage of the pixel (containing the center point) that lies within the edge of the primitive. Stroyan discloses in abstract that a system is provided having frame buffer circuitry uniquely configured for rendering an antialiased graphics scene. In accordance with one embodiment, the frame buffer circuitry includes a first memory segment for storing color values associated with pixels, a second memory segment for storing alpha values associated with the pixels, a third memory segment for storing depth values associated with the pixels, and a fourth memory segment for storing anti-alias blending information associated with the pixels. "which antialiasing value is retained as a function of the polygon being in the foreground during the rendering operation", [Examiner's interpretation: Applicant uses the language of "during the rendering the antialiasing value is retained", meaning after rendering is done the antialiasing value is not retain.] The reference Stroyan in col. 6, lines 5-52 discloses complete information about the Z-buffer and the data is written in the frame buffer. Stroyan in fig. 4, illustrates frame buffer back and front with z-buffer (step 154). The z-buffer in the frame buffer back can be called a space for secondary z-value. Stroyan in col. 3, lines 37-46 discloses that a system is provided having frame buffer circuitry uniquely configured for rendering an anti-aliased graphics scene. In accordance with one embodiment, the frame buffer

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circuitry includes a first memory segment for storing color values associated with pixels, a second memory segment for storing alpha values associated with the pixels, a third memory segment for storing depth values associated with the pixels, and a fourth memory segment for storing anti-alias blending information associated with the pixels.

12. Claim 13.

As for claim 13, “wherein the created antialiasing value is a single antialiasing value represented as a digital word”, see rejection of claim 12.

13. Claim 14.

As for claim 14, “wherein said antialiasing engine comprises: a supersampling engine for supersampling the edge pixel during rendering thereof to provide a plurality of subpixels, wherein each of the subpixels contains information as to coverage by the polygon; and a conversion device for converting the coverage pattern of the subpixels into a single antialiasing value that represents the positional relationship of the coverage as to neighboring pixels”, Stroyan discloses in (col. 2, lines 52-60) that anti-aliasing methods are generally classified into a super-sampling method and an area sampling method. In the super-sampling method, the color value of a pixel is calculated by obtaining the color values of several sub-pixels within the pixel and averaging (or blending) the obtained color values of the sub-pixels. In area sampling, the area of the polygon occupying a pixel is calculated and then the color value of the area ratio is calculated. Stroyan teaches in (col. 3, lines 50-54)) that the region of interest is effectively extended to pixels that touch the primitive edge in any amount. This allows the invention to represent minority coverage of a pixel by an appropriate blending by a coverage percentage.

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14. Claim 15.

As for claim 15, “wherein the single antialiasing value represents both coverage percentage and the coverage pattern”, the step is inherent because both coverage (percentage and pattern) are sharing the same information.

15. Claim 16.

As for claim 16, “wherein the single antialiasing value comprises a map of the subpixels”, Stroyan teaches in (col. 2, lines 51-60) that anti-aliasing methods are generally classified into a super-sampling method and an area sampling method. In the super-sampling method, the color value of a pixel is calculated by obtaining the color values of several sub-pixels within the pixel and averaging (or blending) the obtained color values of the sub-pixels. In area sampling, the area of the polygon occupying a pixel is calculated and then the color value of the area ratio is calculated.

16. Claim 17.

As for claim 17, “ wherein the single antialiasing value has a plurality of bits associated therewith in a digital word of a length equal to the number of subpixels, with each bit having a value that represents whether the subpixel is covered”, the step is inherent because all created value/s represented by digital word and the value is representing the subpixel.

17. Claim 18.

As for claim 18, “and further comprising a filter processing engine operable to filter the edge pixel prior to a display operation by: retrieving the edge pixel and the associated antialiasing value; determining the color of at least one adjacent pixel to the edge pixel; blending the color of the at least one adjacent pixel with the edge pixel as a function of the positional relationship

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of the subpixels in the supersampled edge pixel to provide an antialiased pixel; and storing the antialiased pixel in a frame buffer", Stroyan discloses and illustrates in (col. 8, lines 50-67) and Fig. 6, that is illustrating the top-level functional operation of a method for preserving color blending information, in accordance with one aspect of the present invention. In accordance with this method, a first step (step 202) may be to determine whether a given pixel is an edge pixel (i.e., a pixel that borders a primitive edge). If not, then the pixel color may be directly written into the appropriate memory segment of the frame buffer (step 204). Thereafter, a coverage value of one (binary value "1111") may be written to the extra byte 162 of memory segment 160, corresponding to the current pixel (step 206). Thereafter, the method may proceed to the next pixel (step 208), and the foregoing steps may be repeated for each pixel of a rasterization. If a given pixel is determined to be an edge pixel, then the method may determine the coverage area for the current pixel (step 210). In this regard, the coverage area is the percentage of the pixel (containing the center point) that lies within the edge of the primitive. Stroyan discloses in abstract that a system is provided having frame buffer circuitry uniquely configured for rendering an antialiased graphics scene. In accordance with one embodiment, the frame buffer circuitry includes a first memory segment for storing color values associated with pixels, a second memory segment for storing alpha values associated with the pixels, a third memory segment for storing depth values associated with the pixels, and a fourth memory segment for storing anti-alias blending information associated with the pixels. Stroyan discloses in (col. 2, lines 52-60) that anti-aliasing methods are generally classified into a super-sampling method and an area sampling method. In the super-sampling method, the color value of a pixel is calculated by obtaining the color values of several sub-pixels within the

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pixel and averaging (or blending) the obtained color values of the sub-pixels. In area sampling, the area of the polygon occupying a pixel is calculated and then the color value of the area ratio is calculated.

18. Claim 19.

As for claim 19, “wherein said filter is operable to determine the color of at least two adjacent pixels to the edge pixel, and blend the color of the at least two adjacent pixels with the edge pixel as a function of the positional relationship of the subpixels in the supersampled edge pixel to the at least two adjacent pixels to provide the antialiased pixel”, Stroyan teaches in (col. 2, lines 51-60) that anti-aliasing methods are generally classified into a super-sampling method and an area sampling method. In the super-sampling method, the color value of a pixel is calculated by obtaining the color values of several sub-pixels within the pixel and averaging (or blending) the obtained color values of the sub-pixels. In area sampling, the area of the polygon occupying a pixel is calculated and then the color value of the area ratio is calculated. And also see rejection of claim 3.

19. Claim 20.

As for claim 20, “wherein said antialiasing engine is operable to further create a depth value in association with the antialiasing value, which depth value comprises the depth value of the subpixel that is covered by the foremost polygon”, Stroyan teaches in (col. 2, lines 51-60) that anti-aliasing methods are generally classified into a super-sampling method and an area sampling method. In the super-sampling method, the color value of a pixel is calculated by obtaining the color values of several sub-pixels within the pixel and averaging (or blending) the obtained color

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values of the sub-pixels. In area sampling, the area of the polygon occupying a pixel is calculated and then the color value of the area ratio is calculated.

Conclusion


Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Javid A Amini whose telephone number is 703-605-4248. The examiner can normally be reached on 8-4pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Michael Razavi can be reached on 703-305-4713. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Javid A Amini
Examiner
Art Unit 2672

Javid Amini


JEFFREY BRIN
PRIMARY EXAMINER